Opinion
Guest Voices



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During Holy Week, which began with Palm Sunday (April 13), we remember the last days of Jesus before he was arrested, tortured and killed for challenging the religious and political orthodoxy of his time.

Jesus stressed compassion and love over scrupulous observance of religious rules. He refused to join in violence, whether to defend or overthrow the state. He would not kowtow to kings and governors but instead spoke in defense of the poor and marginalized.

He fed the hungry without demanding anything in return. He healed the sick and brought peace to those possessed by demons. He reached out with compassion to those who were ostracized for being different. Even sinners flocked to him because he personified the mercy of God.

> Where were you when they crucified my Lord?
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While the common people followed him, those in power derided him for upsetting the status quo. He did not come from the elites but was a carpenter who recruited his followers from fishermen. And when he preached, he told stories rather than quoting respected authorities.

For all of this, the people loved him, but the establishment feared and hated him as a disruptive force. They did to him what they do to all troublemakers: They arrested, tortured and killed him.

All over the world, Christ is again being crucified in the bodies of human rights lawyers and journalists who stand up for justice in the face of criminality, whether from gangs or governments. Most people are bullied into silence, but these few speak out against corruption and exploitation, and they meet the same opposition that Jesus did. They are arrested, tortured and killed.

Christ is again being crucified in the bodies of doctors and nurses who put their lives at risk caring for the wounded in war zones. They die when ambulances and hospitals are targeted with bombs, rockets and drones. In following the  example of Jesus in caring for the sick, they meet the same fate as Jesus: death.

Christ is again being crucified in the bodies of refugees forced to flee war, gangs and political violence. They flee because they are politically or religiously different from those with guns. They flee to protect their children. They flee because they have no other option. Rather than being welcomed with Christian love, they are corralled into camps with dilapidated shelter, unsanitary conditions and insufficient food. They die in suffering as Jesus did.

Christ is again being crucified in the bodies of those sick with smallpox, Ebola, bubonic plague, malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, cholera, flu, COVID-19, polio and measles. Most of these diseases are preventable, but only if adequately funded public health programs are made available. But rather than reaching out to the sick as Jesus did, we look the other way, foolishly hoping we will never get sick.

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Christ is again being crucified in the bodies of exploited workers who can not make enough money to support their families and who can lose their jobs at the whim of a distant corporate office that only sees numbers on a spreadsheet.

Christ is again being crucified in the bodies of women and children trafficked and yet being treated as criminals and not as victims.

Christ is again being crucified in the bodies of those with addictions who are shunned rather than being provided with treatment that saves lives and leads to recovery.

Christ is again being crucified in all the living creatures of earth who are struggling to live and becoming extinct because of our consumer economy and its impact on the climate.

We hear Christ's voice speaking of us, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." But are we ignorant today?

After World War II, many Germans claimed they did not know what was happening to the Jews, but too many did know.

Today, no one can claim that they do not know what is happening to God's children around the world. Print and broadcast media and the Internet are filled with examples of Christ again being crucified in the bodies of his brothers and sisters, yet we look away because we do not want to see the face of the crucified Christ. We turn to TikTok, Instagram, YouTube or a streaming service to numb our minds and hearts to the reality of Christ being crucified again in our world.

Where were you when they crucified my Lord?

This story appears in the **Lent 2025** feature series. View the full series.